



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 5a1
December 20, 2016

Ken Wagner, Ph.D.
Commissioner

December 20, 2016

TO: Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education
FROM: Ken Wagner, Ph.D., Commissioner *[Signature]*
RE: **Achievement First – Request for Charter Expansion Amendment**

I present for your consideration a recommendation to approve Achievement First's request for an expansion.

Amendment Request for Expansion:

Achievement First is a Mayoral Academy network charter located in Providence. Achievement First currently serves 722 students in grades K-4 across two schools (Providence and Illuminar Mayoral Academies). Achievement First is authorized to serve up to 920 students in grades K-5. Students enroll primarily from Providence, as well as Cranston, North Providence, and Warwick.

Achievement First requested an amendment to its charter to increase the charter's enrollment from 920 students in grades K-5 to 3,112 students across grades K-12. Students would be organized into three elementary schools (K-4), three middle schools (5-8), and one high school (9-12). All students will be enrolled from Achievement First's currently approved catchment area of Cranston, North Providence, Providence, and Warwick. The significant majority of students (86%) are from Providence.

In accordance to R.I.G.L. §16-77.4-3, requests for amendments to a charter for expansion require the action of the Council of Elementary and Secondary Education. Further, when considering the overall merits of a charter expansion application, R.I.G.L. § 16-77.4-3 requires the Council to place substantial weight on the fiscal impact on the city or town, programmatic impact on the sending school district, and the educational impact on the students in the sending district to ensure that the proposal is economically prudent for the city or town, and academically prudent for the proposed sending school district and for all students in the sending district.

RIDE has conducted an in-depth review of the proposed amendment request, including Achievement First's track record of academic performance, public feedback, and the impact that the proposed expansion request would have on local communities.

RIDE has concluded that the proposal submitted by Achievement First is both academically and economically prudent, and will result in high-quality academic opportunities for Rhode Island's students – particularly the approximately 15,000 students that currently attend a Providence school that's been identified for many years as in need of dramatic improvement.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education moves to approve the Achievement First charter amendment for expansion, permitting Achievement First to enroll up to 3,112 students in grades K-12 from Cranston, North Providence, Providence, and Warwick.

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